My Navy Career

1944 - 1946

by

Robert R. Love



## DEED OF GIFT

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## My Navy Career - 1944-1946

## by Robert R. Love

Veterans Day November 11, 2015

[NOTE: This is a greatly expanded account of a presentation which was done on November 4, 2015, with enlarged documents to the weekly Methodist men Wednesday breakfast at Richards Restaurant in Auburn, Indiana.]

Over 71 years ago in Bloomington, Indiana, my home town, the wartime month of May, 1944, was a very significant month for me:

On May 2, 1944, I turned 18 years of age and immediately registered as required then with the county draft board.

On May 25, 1944, I graduated from Bloomington's University High School. On May 27, 1944, I was ordered to report for a pre-induction physical.

I passed the physical. Everyone did!

I was ordered to report for an induction physical on August 1.

I was second in line at the last stop in the induction process. Only two Navy positions were available that day and I got one of them, just as I had hoped! The rest of that day's inductees went into the army.

On August 1, I was inducted into the US Navy as an Apprentice Seaman.

I served on three Navy bases:

Sampson, New York--recruit training (boot camp) (ten weeks)
Tanforan Race Track, San Bruno, California--advanced base training (two months)

Subic Bay, Bataan Penisula, Philippines--mainly in an office (13 months)

At Sampson, I was in a 5000-man Unit G training unit for ten weeks. I learned Navy routine and vocabulary, was outfited in Navy clothes--blues, whites, dungerees, underwear, and shoes. I was tested and then trained to be a support-staff member--serving in mess halls and on guard duty.

Sampson was located on the northeast side of Seneca Lake, one of New York's finger lakes near the city of Geneva.

I learned a lot of Navy vocabulary:

Head--rest room

Deck--floor Bulkhead--wall Boots--leather leggings Watch--four hours of duty Smoking lamp is lit--You may smoke

Time was told by bells--eight bells to each four hour watch.

Recruits had to wear boots--hence, the term "boot camp".

After boot camp and a week's leave, I was sent west to San Bruno, California, south of San Francisco, for advanced base training. The base was at the Tanforan Horseracing Track, which had been taken over by the US Navy for use as a training base.

We arrived before barracks had been built and were housed in horse stables on cots for a month. We were given shots and issued green uniforms--"greens"--which I wore the rest of my Navy career.

The area under the grandstand served as our mess hall and recreation area.

We were issued carbine rifles, taught how to fire them, and taught how to clean them, but we were issued ammunition only on the firing range. We kept our carbines until war's end, always without ammunition.

Near the end of December, my unit was moved to Treasure Island as a preparation for shipping out.

My unit shipped out of San Francisco Bay into the Pacific on the evening of January 1, 1945, destination unknown.

What a beautiful sight--the sun setting in the west as we passed under the Golden Gate bridge!

However, as the troop ship began to roll and pitch, the head soon became a vomit skating rink!

We were at Pearl Harbor for a week while a convoy of thirty or forty ships was assembled.

On board ship, we ate hot K rations in shifts, standing up. Each of us carried his own mess kit which we washed after eating.

Midway across the Pacific in January, 1945, my convoy stopped at Eniwetok atoll--for five weeks of sunny, boring days. At that time, I didn't know why we had stopped there.



It turned out that we were to be a part of a shore base at Lingayen Gulf on Luzon, Philippines. However, when the military took the gulf, it was discovered that the harbor was unsuitable, so the Armed Forces then went south about a hundred miles and took Subic Bay, which was to became my destination. Meanwhile, we waited at Eniwetok atoll and were told nothing. Eniwetok had an aircraft landing strip and a huge open-air supply dump. Occasionally, we were part of work parties ashore. We moved cases of supplies from one stack to another. We got to eat in the shore mess hall and really enjoyed the absence of K rations!

After the war, A-bomb tests were held at Eniwetok.

Arriving at Subic Bay, our ship put down its anchor. We climbed down rope webs into LCMs, which carried us to shore. The front ramp was let down for us to exit. We were within a few feet of the beach and the water was just a few inches deep. We all took off our shoes and socks, waded ashore, dried our feet, and put our socks and shoes back on before we began a half-mile walk to our tents.

Once I reached Subic Bay, I began serving in a mess hall.

Periodically, in mess hall service, we had to serve a long day in the grease pits--washing pots and pans. When we did, we got a day off. One of my friends thought that was a big deal, so for his entire time at Subic Bay he worked only in the grease pits--one day on and one day off, happily!

The weather was constantly moderate, not requiring a coat.

One day I had a severe toothache and reported to sick call. The dentist took a quick look and said that he had to pull the bad tooth. Did he know what he was doing, I wondered? However, after the tooth had been pulled, he showed it to me. The tooth was just a shell! He was right!

We lived in 8-man tents for a few months until open-air barracks were constructed. I learned from a tentmate that an office was looking for a typist. I reported to the warrant officer in charge of the office and was "hired". I spent the rest of my Navy service working in various capacities in the T-shaped quanset hut office of Captain Webb, the Commander, Naval Operating Base, Subic Bay.

There were five Navy bases at Subic Bay: the Naval Operating Base (where I worked), a ship repair base, a supply base, a hospital base, and a submarine base.

The Navy filing system was complex. Every document (no computers) had to be filed. Warrant Officer Wynn, who managed the Captain's office, knew the system well. He assigned a Navy number to each document received, such as "AG 1034.27"; then the document went to the person who would act on the document; then the document was filed--usually by me.

Whenever a ship came into the harbor, the ship's commanding officer had



to make a courtesy call on the Commander, Naval Operating Base, located in my office. He would present his orders (we made a copy), and he would receive twenty-five copies of an endorsement on his orders, which we made by typing (cutting) a stencil and running off the copies on a mimeograph machine, a job which I often did. My office was very busy with that routine!

Routinely, we handled documents and comunications which were classified "restricted", "confidential", "secret", or "top secret".

When I had been in the Navy for a year and at Subic Bay for five months, about 8 AM on August 14, 1945, most of the ships in the harbor began honking horns and shooting off guns. We all rushed out of our office to the seawall, thirty feet away to see what was going on.

The Japanese had surrendered. The war was over!

After ten minutes we went back to work.

I was assigned to a lieutenant commander for a while. In a small side room, he sat at a desk and wrote on a yellow pad a history of the area. (He had been a college professor.) While he worked, I sat at a typewriter and wrote personal letters until he gave me what he had been writing. (There was no more censoring of outgoing personal mail after the end of the war.) I then typed his notes double-spaced for him to proofread and adjust as necessary. When he had finished, I would cut stencils of his work, run off twenty-five copies, and collate them. I had this job only a short time before the lieutenant commander was rotated back to the States.

Outside the captain's office in the yard was a gardinia bush which was full of white gardinias. In high school, when boys took girls on formal dates, the girl was always given a gardenia corsage which cost a dollar. Here gardinias were free!

In the fall at Subic Bay came a month-long rainy season. We had to wear rain gear daily. Also, in the fall, there was the threat of a typhoon, so we in the captain's office had to load all of our filing cabinets onto three-quarter-ton trucks parked near the office and sleep on cots in the office--in case we had to flee to the hills suddenly. The typhoon missed us, thank goodness! Then we had to put everything back in its place.

Eventually, I worked with the officer personal yeoman, Walter Wachs. When he was returned to the States for discharge, I replaced him.

The de-mobilizing of the US Armed Forces began according to a point system, and I did not have many points, so I had to wait my turn.

In April, 1946, after just over 15 months overseas, I was rotated back to the US for discharge.

On my troopship in mid-Pacific in April, 1946, we passed the International

Date Line and had two Easter Sundays. The chaplain decided that the first Sunday would be celebrated as Easter, so a special service was held on deck then. During that hour-long service, the Pacific was flat with no waves. After the service, the waves resumed.

Back in the US, I received a thirty-day leave to my home and then was sent to Chicago to the Navy Pier, where I lived for about a week as I went through the discharge process. I was discharged officially on June 8, 1946.

In summary, during WW II, I was drafted into the US Navy and served 22 months, 15 of which were overseas.

At the fiftieth anniversary of my high school graduation, a classmate, Ralph Kerr, told me he was right behind me at the last step of our induction process on August 1, 1944. He wanted to know what had happened to me. He had been inducted into the Army and spent his time in Arkansas.

## #######

P.P.S.

1. In the Philippines, we had three USO entertainments while I was there. The best was by comedian Joe E. Brown, who performed alone his famous slow-motion baseball routine at night in the open beside a big bonfire. About a hundred men sat around the bonfire and watched him perform.

I also saw a play, "Arsenic and Old Lace", in Manila while on a weekend pass.

"This Is the Army", the Irving Berlin musical, was performed on a stage in a large field before thousands of service men.

- 2. While stationed at Subic Bay, I had one weekend leave to Manila and one week-long leave to northern Baguio, which was a military rest camp.
- 3. Wartime rank and rate advancement was fast and easy. I quickly progressed from Seaman Second to Seaman First, to Yeoman Third, and to Yeoman Second with no testing.
- 4. Philipinos were treated with scorn and called "geeks" or "gooks". Women earned a living by doing our laundry. Men took civilian jobs with the American Armed Forces.
- 5. As a child, I always had had trouble swallowing pills. But at Subic Bay I learned quickly to swallow pills. In our chow line was a bowl of atabrine pills. We had to take one each day to help prevent malaria.
  - 6. Cigarettes were 5 cents a pack in the Armed Services (no taxes)



(regular civilian price 20 cents). I smoked in the Navy, as did 95 % of the sailors. After the war, in civilian life, when I got a sore throat, I couldn't smoke. After a sore throat in January of 1947, six months after I left the Navy, I quit smoking for good.

- 7. In the Navy, every other word was a cuss word. My cussing ended with my Navy career.
- 8. Because of my 22 months inn the US Navy, the GI Bill paid for nearly all of my IU undergraduate degree.
- 9. A Subic Bay Navy buddy, Jack Minton of Lafayette, was the captain's orderly. Our girl friends were both friends and classics students at IU Bloomington. Both were named Elizabeth and were called Betty by their families. We married on the same day--June 5, 1949--I in Bloomington and Jack in Evansville. We both graduated from IU Bloomington in June, 1950. We still exchange Christmas cards, over sixty-five years later!

#######



# Local Board No. 2 51 Monroe County 108 East Kirkwood Bloomington, Indiana (Local Board Date Stage With Code)

ROBERT

To



REED

#### SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

# Order to Report Preinduction Physical Examination

LOVE

(Member or clerk of Local Board)

May 27, 1944
(Date of mailing)

11902

## The President of the United States,

	(First name)	(IV	liddle name)		(Last name)	(Order No.)
GREETING:	:					
You are	e hereby dir	ected to report for	preinduction	physical exa	mination at	
	108½ E.	Kirkwood Ave.,	Blooming to			
at 7:45 (Hour of repo		the 2nd (Day)	of June	(Month)	, 194.4	
				CON AMERICA	MERSAN	andre

### IMPORTANT NOTICE TO REGISTRANT

Every registrant.—When you report for preinduction physical examination you will be forwarded to an induction station where you will be given a complete physical examination to determine whether you are physically fit for service. If you sign a Request for Immediate Induction (Form 219), and you are found qualified for service, you will be inducted immediately following the completion of your preinduction physical examination. Otherwise, upon completion of your preinduction physical examination, you will be returned to this Local Board. You will be furnished transportation and meals and lodgings when necessary. Following your preinduction physical examination you will receive a certificate issued by the commanding officer of the induction station showing your physical fitness for service or lack thereof.

If you fail to report for preinduction physical examination as directed, you will be delinquent and will be immediately ordered to report for induction into the armed forces. You will also be subject to fine and imprisonment under the provisions of section 11 of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended.

If you are so far from your own Local Board that reporting in compliance with this order will be a hardship and you desire to report to the Local Board in the area in which you are now located, take this order and go immediately to that Local Board and make written request for transfer for preinduction physical examination.



## Prepare in Duplicate

Local Board No. 2 Monroe County	51 105	
	002	
108½ East Kirkwood Bloomington, Indiana		



July 22, 1944 (Date of mailing)

## ORDER TO REPORT FOR INDUCTION

The President of the United States,

To ROBERT	REED	LOVE	
(First name)	(Middle name)	(Last name)	

Order No. 11902

#### GREETING:

Having submitted yourself to a local board composed of your neighbors for the purpose of determining your availability for training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States, you are hereby notified that you have now been selected for training and service therein.

You will, therefore, report to the local board named above at Blooming ton, Indiana
(Place of reporting)

Tue sday

at 7:45 a. m., on the local board named above at Blooming ton, Indiana
(Place of reporting)

Tue sday

at 7:45 a. m., on the local board named above at Blooming ton, Indiana
(Place of reporting)

This local board will furnish transportation to an induction station. You will there be examined, and, if accepted for training and service, you will then be inducted into the land or naval forces.

Persons reporting to the induction station in some instances may be rejected for physical or other reasons. It is well to keep this in mind in arranging your affairs, to prevent any undue hardship if you are rejected at the induction station. If you are employed, you should advise your employer of this notice and of the possibility that you may not be accepted at the induction station. Your employer can then be prepared to replace you if you are accepted, or to continue your employment if you are rejected.

Willful failure to report promptly to this local board at the hour and on the day named in this notice is a violation of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, and subjects the violator to fine and imprisonment.

If you are so far removed from your own local board that reporting in compliance with this order will be a serious hardship and you desire to report to a local board in the area of which you are now located, go immediately to that local board and make written request for transfer of your delivery for induction, taking this order with you.

u. s. government printing office 16-15571-5 Member or clerk of the local board.



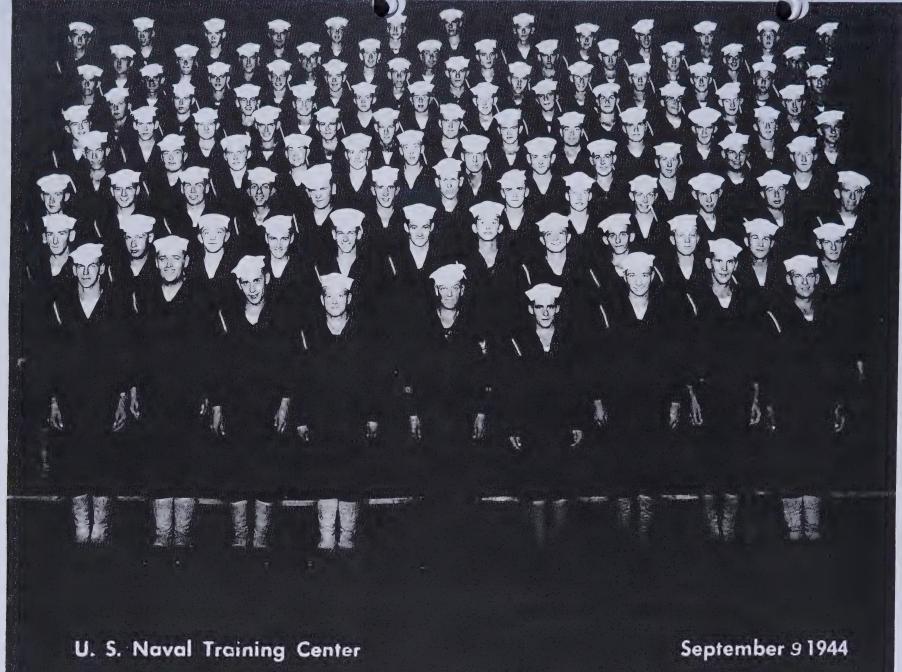


U. S. Naval Training Center Sampson, N. Y.

September 9 1944

Co. 560



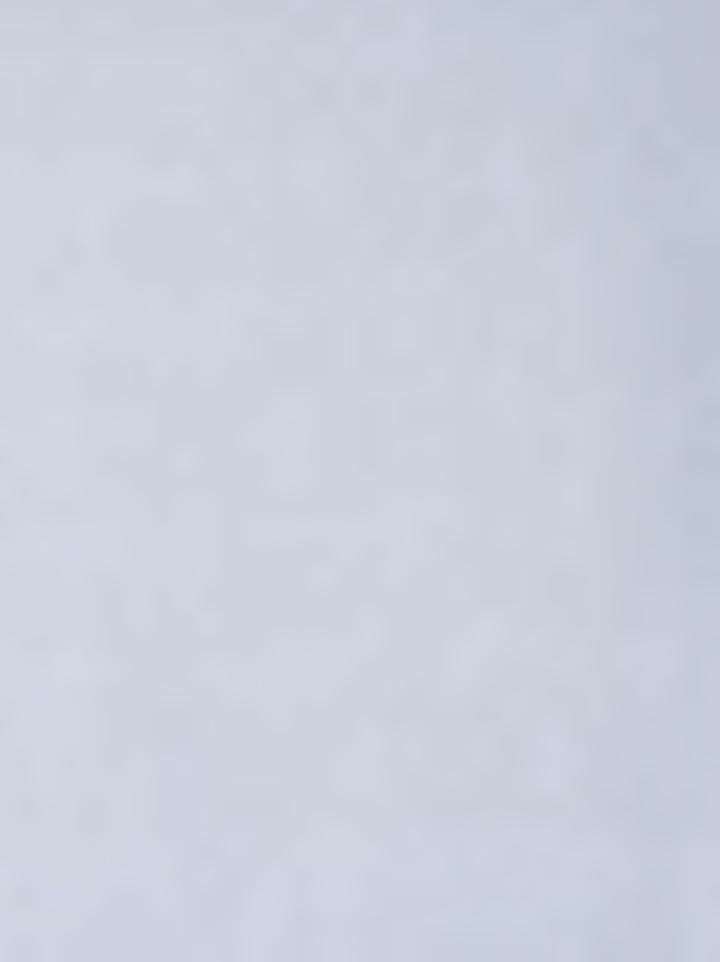


Sampson, N. Y.

Co. 560

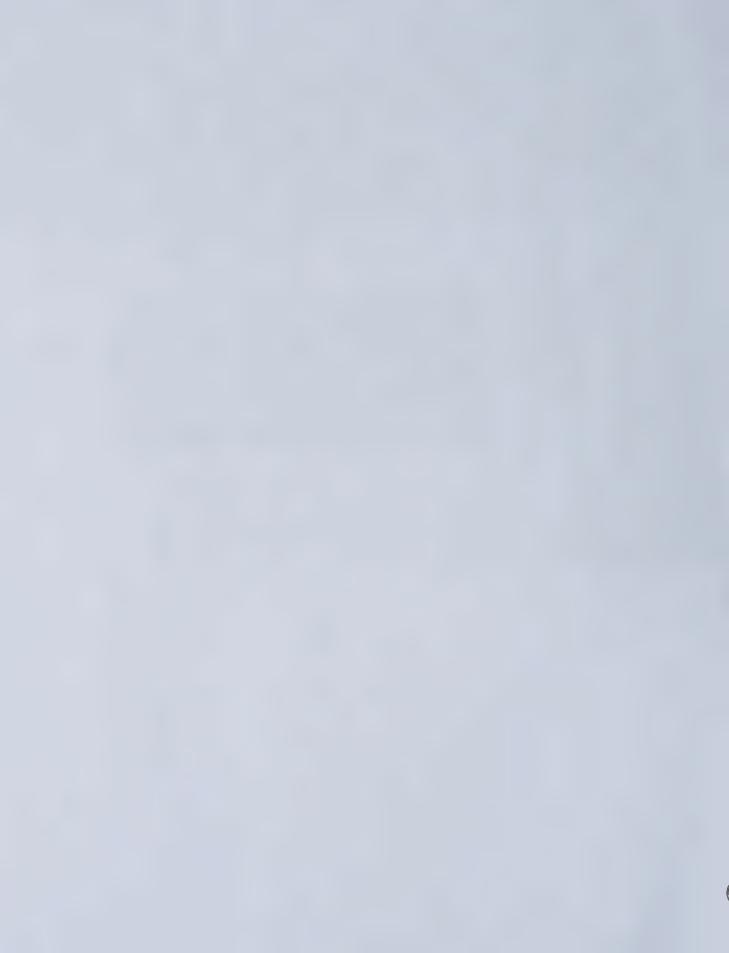






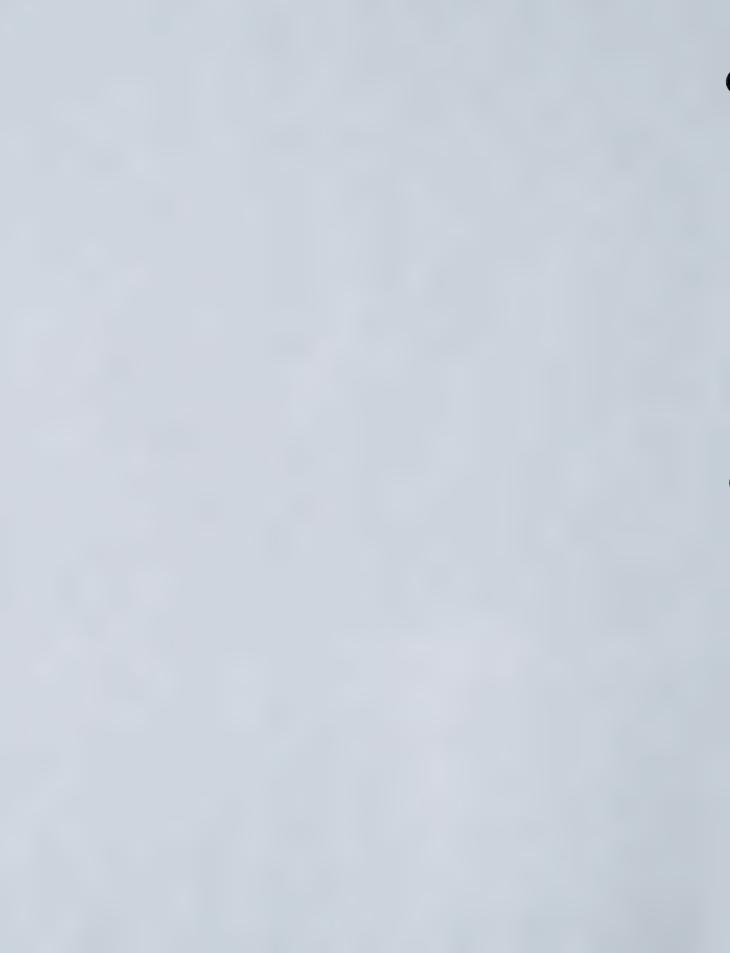
Seaman Second Class Robert R. Love, 18, is home on leave at 1319 East University, Bloomington, Indiana, after ten weeks of Navy recruit training at Sampson, New York. His next post will be at San Bruno, California, for advanced shore base training. Late October, 1944.

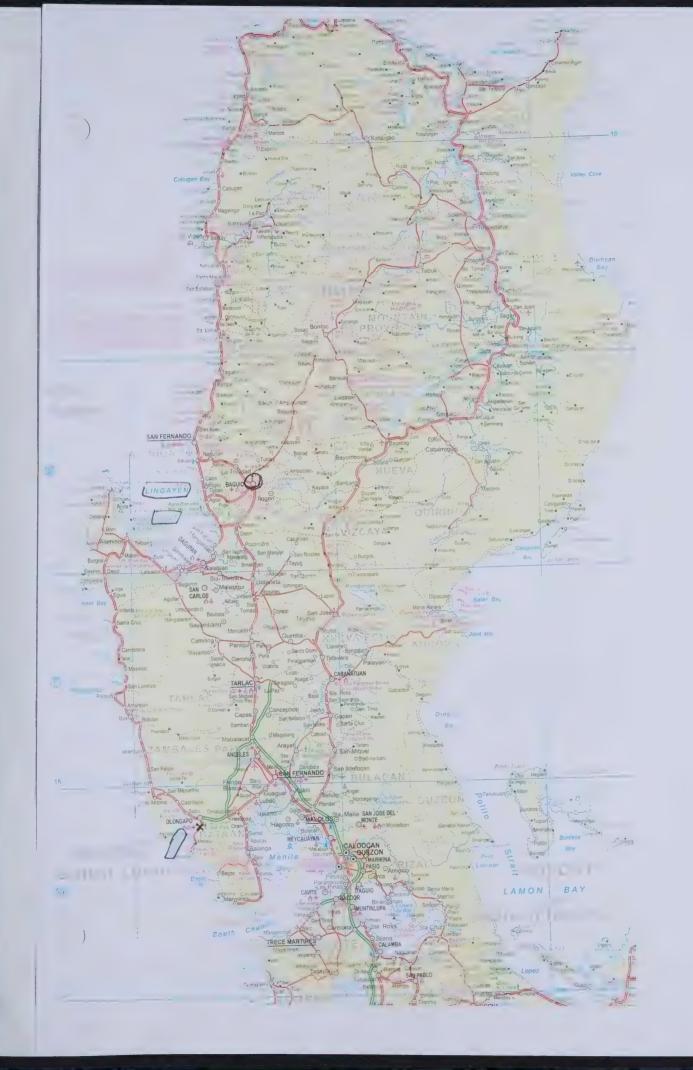


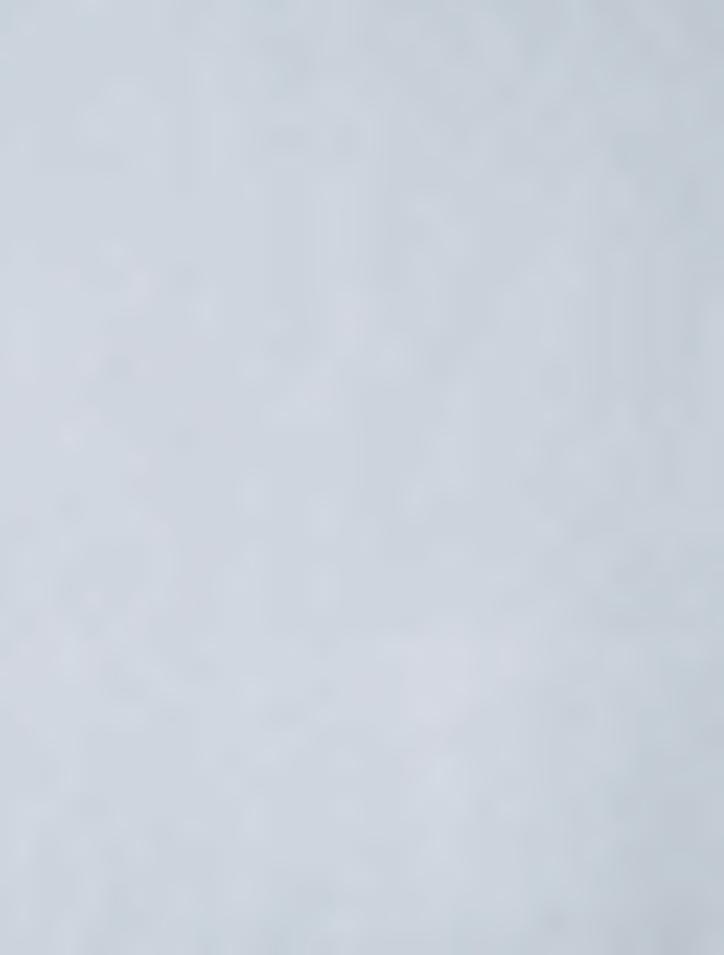


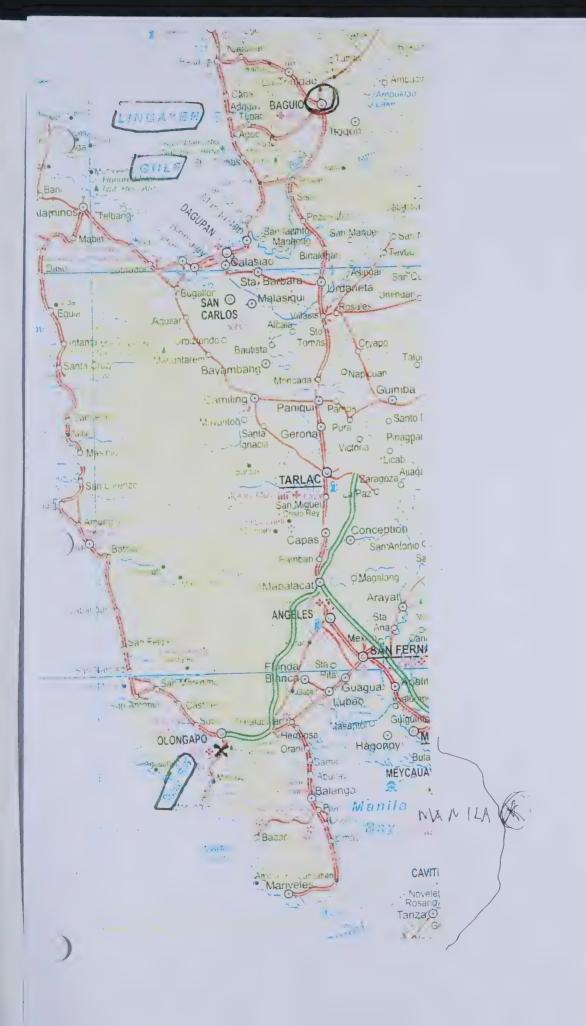
Four Navy buddies on week-end pass from advance base training at San Bruno, California. November, 1944. San Francisco, California. Seaman Second Class Robert R. Love is in the front at right.

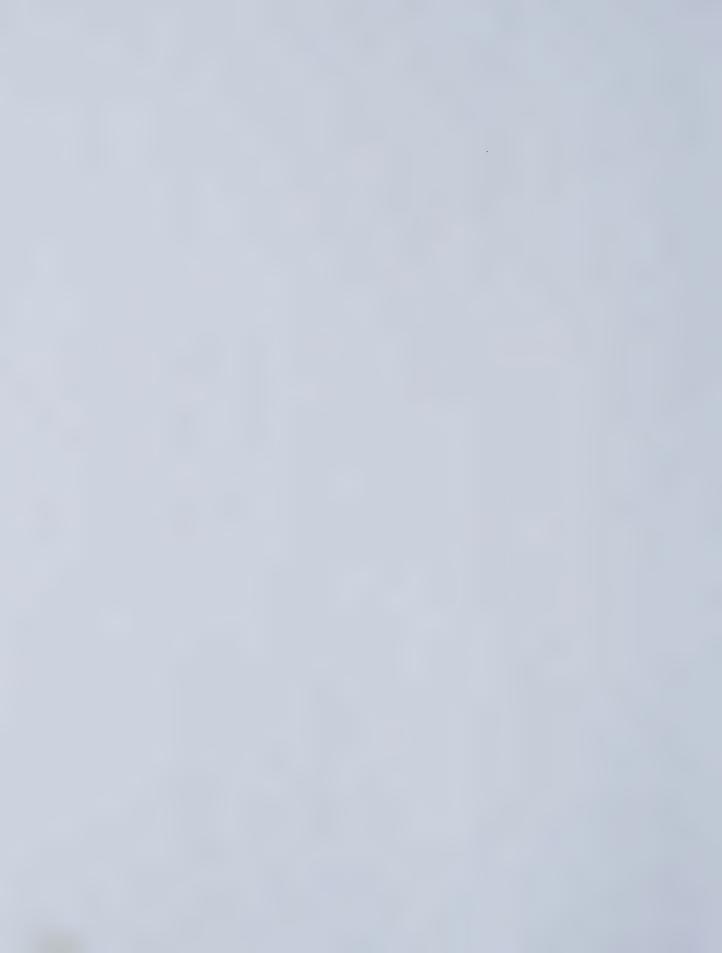


















OCTOBER, 1945 USHOB, SUBIC BAY CAPTAINS OFFICE



SUBIC BAY



## CARD NO 4

## CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

61 31

165

A TOTAL TOTAL TOTAL TOTAL

White

Brown Green

5/92/26

LOVE, Robert R., Y3c(T) 956 19 63 THORIVET CONTRACTOR STREET

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A. N. WILLIAMS

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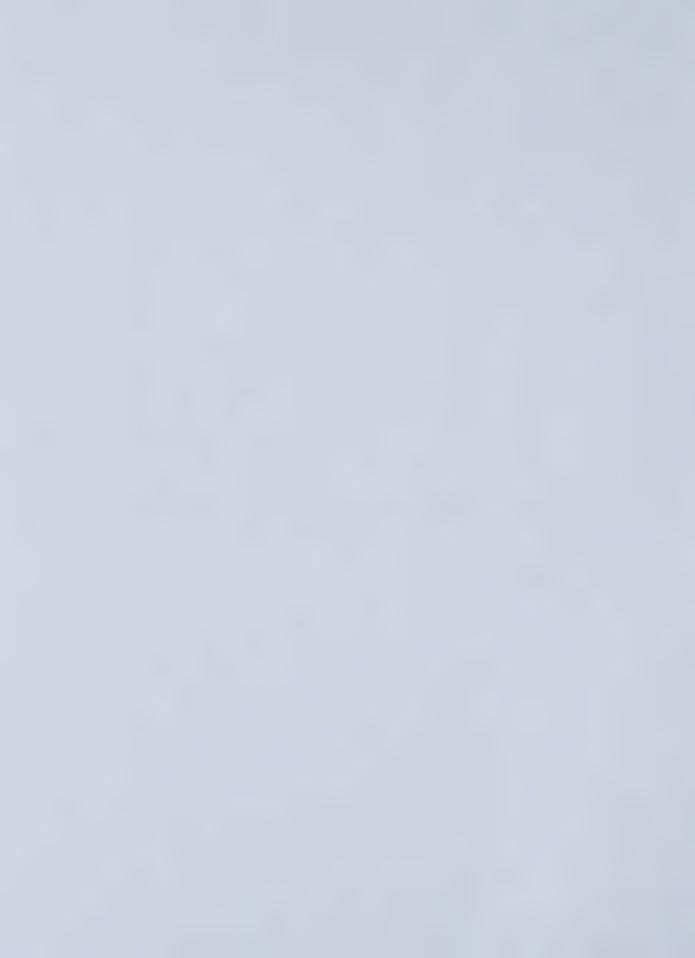
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HEADING FOR STATES TODAY NINE APRIL EXPECT TO BE HOME EARLY PART OF MAY ON LEAVE STOP WRITING ALL MY LOVE=

57

3002.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE



NOTICE OF SEPARATION FROM U.S. NAVAL SERVICE 646-263-1 S. PLACE OF BEPARATION NAME (LAST) (FIRST) (MIDDLE) RANK AND CLASSIFICATION 4. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES USN PERSEPCEN GREAT LAKES. ILLINOIS 956-19-63 LOVE, ROBERT REED S. CHARACTER OF SEPARATION YEOMAN 2c USN-I (SA) HONORABLE 1319 E. UNIVERSITY ST. 7. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA SAME AS #L MONROE COUNTY 12. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH 11. U.S. CITIZEN (YES OR NO) 8. RACE 10. MARITAL STATUS 5-2-26 JASONVILLE, IND. STNGLE 15. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE Sel. Ser. Data LB2 BLOOMINGTON, IND. SAME AS #4 18. NET SERVICE (FOR PAY PURPOSES)
(YRS., MOS., DAYS)
1 10 8 NO 17. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 16. MEANS OF ENTRY (INDICATE BY CHECK IN APPROPRIATE BOX SERVICE 8-1-44 COMMISSIONED 19. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE DATE DATE 8-1-44 NRS INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 22. FOREIGN AND/OR SEA 20. QUALIFICATIONS, CERTIFICATES HELD, ETC. NAVAL AS:S2c:S1c:Y3c SEE RDB FOR Y2c 24. SERVICE (VESSELS AND STATIONS SERVED ON) WEEKS 23. SERVICE SCHOOLS COMPLETED NTC SAMPSON, N.Y. USNABPD SAN BRUNO, CALIF. USN BASE NAVY 3002 NONE IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTOR'S SUBDIVISION, VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

ANCE 26, EFFECTIVE MONTH OF 27, NO. NEVY DEFINITION. 27. MO. NEXT PREMIUM 28. AMOUNT OF PREMIUM DUE | 29. INTENTION OF VETERAN DUE | TITLE | EACH MONTH | AND COMMENT | 26. EFFECTIVE MONTH OF ALLOTMENT DISCONTINUANCE EACH MONTH 6.40 Y JULY 31. TRAVEL OR MILEAGE ALLOWANCE 35. SIGNATURE (BY DIRECTION OF COMMANDING OFFICER)
HENDRALE SAME DECRETE SURFACE SAME 30. TOTAL PAYMENT UPON DISCHARGE 12.65 148.49 REMARKS POINT SYSTEM VICTORY MEDAL ALERICAN AREA CAMPAIGN MEDAL PHILIPPINE LIBERATION RIBBON ASIATIC PACIFIC AREA CAMPAIGN MEDAL FOR: M. GOLDSTEIN LT. USNR 87. DATES OF LAST EMPL'MT. | 38. MAIN CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND D. O. T. NO. 36. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST EMPLOYER DATA STUDENT FROM STUDENT 40 PREFERENCE FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING (TYPE OF TRAINING) 19. JOB PREFERENCE (LIST TYPE, LOCALITY, AND GENERAL AREA) BUSINESS -- SECRETARIAL CONTINUE SCHOOLING 44. VOCATIONAL OR TRADE COURSES (NATURE AND LENGTH OF COURSE) 41. NON-SERVICE EDU (YRS. SUCCESS-FULLY COMPLETED) 42. DEGREES 12 MAJOR COURSE OR FIELD NONE GRAM. 8 H. S. 4 COLL. - COLT EDUCATIONAL COURSES COMPLETED EMPLOYMENT. MONE 47. DATE OF SEPARATION 6-8-26





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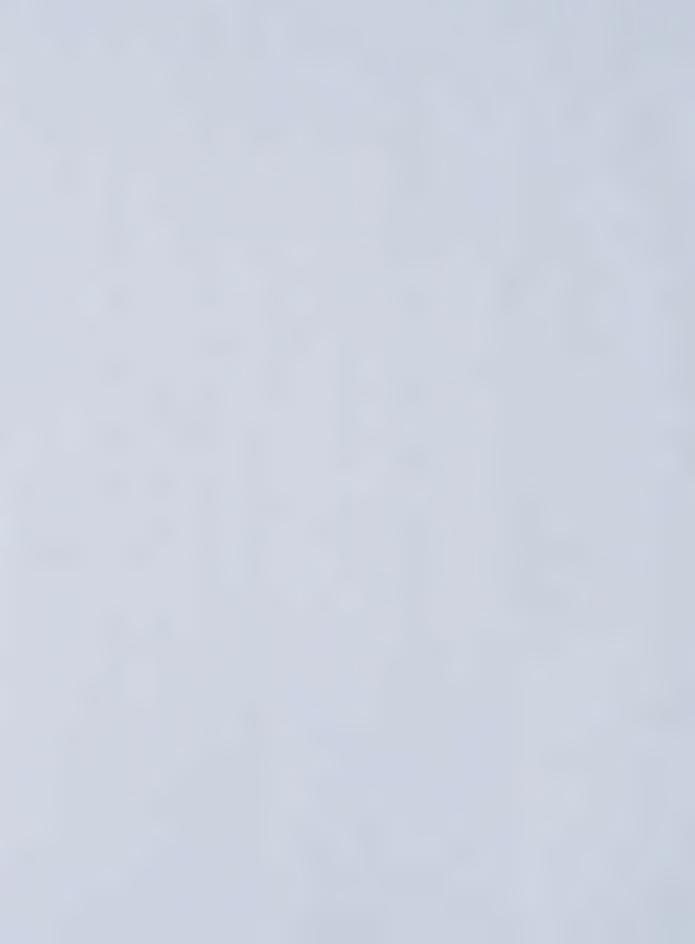
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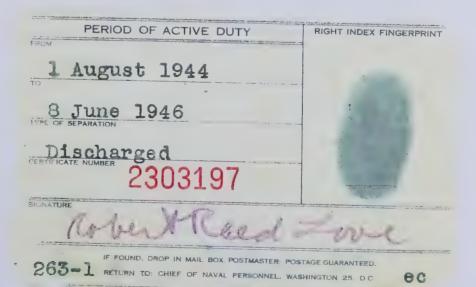
ROBERT REED LOVE

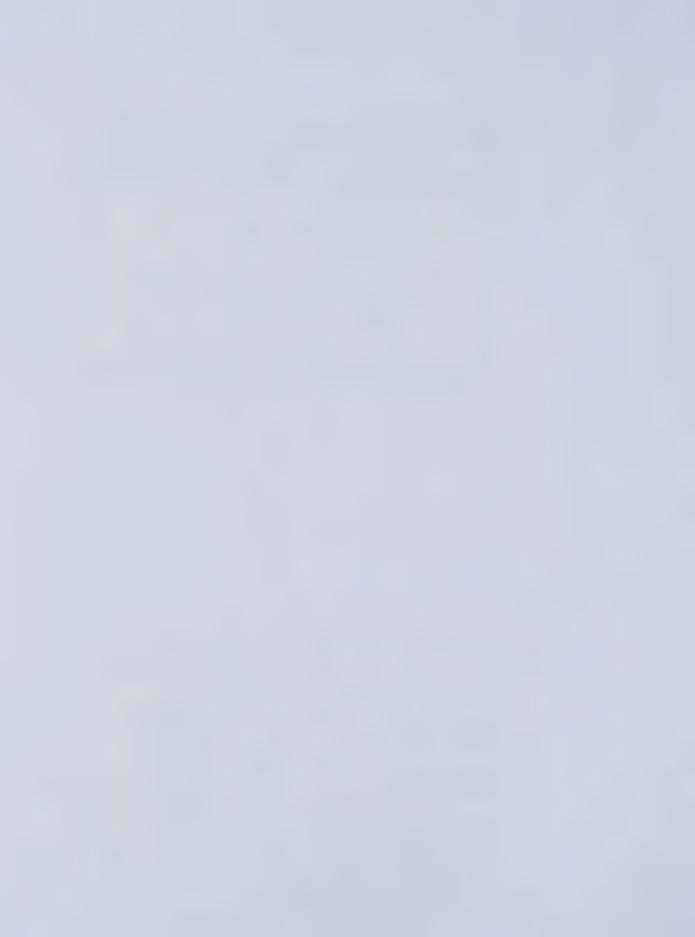
// YEOMAN SECOND CLASS, USNR

i) Humurahly Discharged from the separation center, GREAT LAKED, ILLINOIS and from the Haral Ferrier of the United States ///// 8TH ////// JUNE 1946 This certificate is awarded as a Testimonial of Fidelity and Wheeliener E. W. SPRINGER, LIEUTENANT (JG) USNR









	Control of the Contro
	SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM Approval of Budget Bureau not required
	Love Robert Reed
	(Last name) (Middle name)
	Selective Service No. 12 55 26 123 has
	been classified in Class 5A (Until
	19) by K Local Board, Appeal Board,
	by vote of to
•	May 21, 1952 at was 1
	(Date of mailing) (Member of local board)
	The law requires you subject to helden bendity for violation. to carry
	this potice in addition to your Registration Certificate, on your person
	at all times—to exhibit it upon request to authorized officials—to
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	Ton advice see Jour Condynment appeal agent.
	board; (2) to notify it of any change of address; (3) to notify it of any fact which might change your classification; (4) to comply with
	the instructions on the notice of classification part of this form.
	SS Form No. 110 (Revised 4-15-49)
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